



Strong is the New Skinny

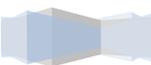
This controversial issue has been a hot topic these days. Back in the 1950s it was all about being fit, healthy and happy. It was about being a better person, not about striving to be a size zero. Marilyn Monroe's curves were considered sexy. Now, the world of fashion is always shrouded in controversy. With ultra-skinny models continually gracing catwalks around the world, it is easy to see why many fall into the trap of thinking eating disorders are the only way to be slim.

More recently, times have seen a slight shift in patterns with some models and celebrities seeing the sexiness of a well-toned body over skeletal frames. The fashion world is synonymous with skinny models and it seems that will never entirely change, but more and more designers are noticing that fit sells.

Weight training is something many women steer clear of their whole lives. Misperceptions about 'bulking up' are a major reason. Concerns that you don't have the strength or stamina to lift weights or fear that it will be painful and difficult are also major reasons that people don't weight train. These are all just myths. Weight training is the same as resistance training and strength training. Women don't gain size from weight training, they sculpt their bodies and strengthen them. Women can use this to decrease fat, develop muscle tone and definition. Women can also increase strength by 30-50 percent with weight training and protect their bones better against osteoporosis. There are compelling reasons to lift weights as part of a fitness routine. Better health, appearance, strength and confidence are just a few. Also, if you add muscle to your body, you are able to eat more without gaining weight. Women of every age should give weight training a try.

Lifting weights will increase lean muscle tissue and increase your resting metabolism for 24 hours or longer after your exercise session. You will build stronger connective tissue and improve the stability of your joints. This helps to reduce the risk of injuries, improve coordination and balance and reduce heart disease and diabetes risks. If you already have diabetes, vigorous exercise and resistance training will help you drop your blood sugar levels. You'll improve bone density and reduce or even reverse bone loss or osteoporosis. You will be able to do aerobic/cardio exercise or perform athletic activities more vigorously.

Make sure you at least try working all your major muscle groups. Even if your abs or arms are your chief concern, it's good to run through a number of exercises that will benefit your whole body. Upper body exercises include shoulders, chest, upper back, neck, and front/back of your arms. Torso



Exercises include abdominals, sides, and lower back. Leg Exercises include front and back of thighs, buttocks and calves.

In a survey conducted last year by a university in the United Kingdom, almost 80 percent of men ages 18-26 who were questioned said they preferred women with an average build and both overweight and underweight were as equally off putting. Their tastes were then put to the test when they were shown head shots of 100 women who varied in size and 88 percent preferred the look of those boasting a slim yet fit physique

For more tips on creating a strong lifestyle, contact Sharon Rateike, corporate wellness program coordinator at (920) 568-5475 or Sharon.Rateike@forthc.com.

